

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Southern District of Ohio

In the Matter of the Search of
(Briefly describe the property to be searched
or identify the person by name and address)
United States Priority Mail Express Parcel
EI 466 583 705 US

Case No. 2:23-mj-419

APPLICATION FOR A WARRANT BY TELEPHONE OR OTHER RELIABLE ELECTRONIC MEANS

I, a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government, request a search warrant and state under penalty of perjury that I have reason to believe that on the following person or property (identify the person or describe the property to be searched and give its location):

United States Priority Mail Express Parcel EI 466 583 705 US, currently located at the USPS office in Columbus, Ohio, as described in Attachment A to the Application.
located in the Southern District of Ohio, there is now concealed (identify the person or describe the property to be seized):

The items described in Attachment B to the Application for this Warrant, to include a quantity of controlled substance, proceeds, and/or other items which constitute evidence, instrumentalities, contraband, and/or fruits of violations of Title

The basis for the search under Fed. R. Crim. P. 41(c) is (check one or more):

- ☒ evidence of a crime;
- ☒ contraband, fruits of crime, or other items illegally possessed;
- ☐ property designed for use, intended for use, or used in committing a crime;
- ☐ a person to be arrested or a person who is unlawfully restrained.

The search is related to a violation of:

Code Section	Offense Description
21 U.S.C. 841(a)(1)	Possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance
21 U.S.C. 843(b)	Prohibited use of a communication center (U.S. Mail)
21 U.S.C. 846	Conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance

The application is based on these facts:

As set forth in the attached Affidavit of Postal Inspector Justin D. Koble.

- ☒ Continued on the attached sheet.
- ☒ Delayed notice of 30 days (give exact ending date if more than 30 days:) is requested under 18 U.S.C. § 3103a, the basis of which is set forth on the attached sheet.

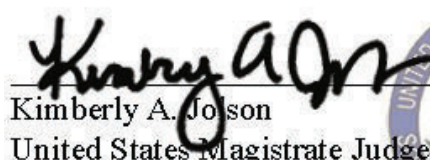

Applicant's signature

Justin D Koble, US Postal Inspector
Printed name and title

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by
(specify reliable electronic means)

Date: July 17, 2023

City and state: Columbus, OH


Kimberly A. Johnson
United States Magistrate Judge



**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE OPENING AND SEARCH OF:)	
)	CASE NO. 2:23-mj-419
)	
UNITED STATES PRIORITY MAIL)	MAGISTRATE JUDGE JOLSON
EXPRESS PARCEL EI 466 583 705 US)	

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION
UNDER RULE 41 FOR A WARRANT TO SEARCH AND SEIZE**

I, Justin D. Koble, being duly sworn, do hereby state the following:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a United States Postal Inspector with the United States Postal Inspection Service (“USPIS”) and have been so employed since July 2014. I am currently assigned to the Narcotics and Money Laundering Team at the USPIS’s Columbus, Ohio field office. In this capacity, I am responsible for investigating the illegal use of the United States Mails for the purpose of transporting controlled substances such as methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl, fentanyl-related analogs, cocaine, and other controlled substances, in violation of, among other statutes, Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (manufacturing, distributing, or possessing with the intent to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance), 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility in the commission of a crime), and 846 (drug conspiracy). In addition, I am responsible for investigating possible violations of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1956 and 1957 (money laundering).

2. I have been involved in the investigation and discovery of drug contraband and drug proceeds on numerous occasions. I have personally been the affiant for search warrants that have resulted in the discovery of controlled substances and drug proceeds. My current assignment to the Columbus Processing and Distribution Center (“P&DC”) involves investigating the use of the US Mails by drug traffickers, in which established drug package profiles, surveillance, and drug detection dogs, among other investigative tools, are utilized.

3. Experience and drug trafficking intelligence have demonstrated that Priority Mail

and Priority Mail Express are commonly used to transport drugs and drug proceeds because of their reliability and the time pressures they place on law enforcement agents to execute a successful controlled delivery.

4. This affidavit is made in support of an application under Rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, for a warrant to search the SUBJECT PARCEL described herein and in Attachment A, and seize the items identified in Attachment B. More specifically, this affidavit is made in support of an application to search for and seize evidence, instrumentalities, contraband, and fruits of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) (manufacturing, distributing, or possessing with the intent to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance), 843(b) (unlawful use of a communication facility in the commission of a crime), and 846 (drug conspiracy), from the **United States Priority Mail Express parcel bearing United States Postal Service (“USPS”) tracking number EI 466 583 705 US** (hereinafter referred to as the “SUBJECT PARCEL”).

5. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based on my personal knowledge, knowledge obtained during my participation in this investigation, knowledge obtained from other individuals, review of records related to this investigation, communications with others who have personal knowledge of the events and circumstances described herein, and information gained through my training and experience. Because this affidavit is submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause in support of the application for a search warrant, this affidavit does not set forth each and every fact learned by me during the course of this investigation.

SUBJECT PARCEL

6. On or about July 13, 2023, USPIIS interdiction personnel in Columbus, Ohio interdicted the SUBJECT PARCEL upon arrival at the USPS Columbus Processing and Distribution Center, 2323 Citygate Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43218. The SUBJECT PARCEL is addressed to “Thelma Fultz, 53 N. Jones Ave, Columbus, Ohio 43222”, with a return address of “Cool Cat Auto, 6348 N. 27th Ave #B, Phoenix, AZ 85017”. The SUBJECT PARCEL is a white, USPS Priority Mail size medium flat rate box measuring approximately 11 ¼” x 8 ¾” x 6” and weighing approximately 5 pounds, 10 ounces. The SUBJECT PARCEL was mailed from the USPS Northwest Station Post Office, 4828 North 27th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85017 on or about July 12, 2023. The \$88.60 in United States postage affixed to the SUBJECT PARCEL was paid for using cash. Below is a picture of the SUBJECT PARCEL.



PROBABLE CAUSE

7. Among the characteristics of the drug profile possessed by the SUBJECT PARCEL is the “source state” origination of the parcel, as well as the destination of the SUBJECT PARCEL.

8. Your affiant submits that the origin state of the SUBJECT PARCEL bears on the issue of probable cause here. For example, US Postal Inspectors, Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”), and other intelligence sources have identified Arizona as a source state for illegal drugs flowing into Central Ohio and a destination state for the proceeds from the sale of these illegal drugs. Based on my training and experience, I know drug traffickers frequently utilize various shipping and mail entities, including the United States Postal Service, for the shipment of controlled substances. Frequently, the same shipping entity utilized for the shipment of controlled substances is also utilized for the shipment of the proceeds derived from the sale of these controlled substances.

9. On or about July 14, 2023, checks of USPS, law enforcement, and open-source electronic databases were conducted to determine the validity of the destination information contained on the SUBJECT PARCEL. The destination address, “53 N. Jones Ave,” was found to be a valid and deliverable address in the 43222 zip code. However, the name “Thelma Fultz”

was found to have last been associated with this address in 2003.

10. Further, on or about July 14, 2023, checks of USPS, law enforcement, and open-source electronic databases were conducted to determine the validity of the return information contained on the SUBJECT PARCEL. The return address, “6348 N. 27th Ave #B,” was found to be a valid and deliverable address in the 85017 zip code. A business named “Cool Cat Auto Repair” was found to be in operation at this address.

11. Regarding both the above-described return and destination addresses, I know through training and experience, that shippers of drugs and drug proceeds will often utilize a valid business name and/or address without the knowledge or consent of the business to legitimize the shipment and to reduce the possibility of identification and apprehension by law enforcement. Additionally, while a valid delivery address is necessary to ensure the delivery of a parcel, a fictitious delivery name, to include names of previous residents, is often utilized for the same reasons previously discussed.

12. Because the SUBJECT PARCEL originated in Arizona, a state known as a source of controlled substances being mailed to Central Ohio, the postage was paid for in cash, the return address was found to be associated with an auto repair business, which typically do not ship outbound parcels to residential customers, and the recipient name was determined to have last been associated with the address approximately 20 years ago, investigators submitted the SUBJECT PARCEL for examination by a drug detecting canine.

EXAMINATION BY DRUG DETECTING CANINE

13. On or about July 17, 2023, US Postal Inspectors contacted Trooper Michael Rucker, Ohio State Highway Patrol, who is the handler for “Mac”, a Drug Detecting Canine. K-9 “Mac” has been certified by the Ohio Peace Officers Training Association since December 2016 for tracking, article search, and the detection of marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and their derivatives. K-9 “Mac” has had over 200 hours of training at the Ohio Highway Patrol K9 Training Facility. Both in training and actual deployments, K-9 “Mac” has successfully detected narcotics, by demonstrating clear, passive alerts, and has established himself as a highly reliable police service dog.

14. The SUBJECT PARCEL was hidden among other parcels and USPS mail processing equipment and K-9 “Mac” was allowed to search the entire area. Trooper Rucker concluded that K-9 “Mac” did alert positively to the SUBJECT PARCEL. Based on that alert,

Trooper Rucker concluded that the odor of one or more of the drugs K-9 “Mac” is trained and certified to detect was present.

15. Based upon training and experience, I respectfully submit that the above information is indicative of drug trafficking activity, and that, based on the above, there is probable cause to search the SUBJECT PARCEL.

16. If the SUBJECT PARCEL is found to contain controlled substances, these controlled substances will be seized as part of an ongoing drug trafficking investigation.

CONCLUSION

17. Based upon the foregoing facts and my training, experience, and expertise as a US Postal Inspector, I submit there is probable cause to search the SUBJECT PARCEL for controlled substances, drug proceeds, and other evidence of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 843(b), and 846, as described herein and in Attachments A and B hereto.

18. WHEREFORE, I respectfully request that the Court issue a warrant, authorizing agents of the USPIS, including but not limited to other law enforcement agents and technicians assisting in the above-described investigation, to open, view, and photograph, and seize, if necessary, the SUBJECT PARCEL and its contents.

19. The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.



Justin D. Koble

US Postal Inspector

Sworn and subscribed to me

This 17th day of July 2023



Kimberly A. Jolson
United States Magistrate Judge



Attachment B

Items to Be Seized

- 1.) Any controlled substances which constitute evidence of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 843(b), and 846.
- 2.) United States currency and/or drug proceeds.
- 3.) Items that constitute evidence, instrumentalities, contraband, and/or fruits of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 843(b), and 846.